Precipitate

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Precipitate

by Foul-Mouthed Harlot (Winddrag0n)

Summary

“Hannibal, look.” Frustrated, Will collapses into a chair. “I’m not trying to be cruel, I promise you. The… idea, that you are suffering while I could… lessen it. It’s unbearable.” Hannibal is opening his mouth, but Will raises a hand to ask him to wait. “And before you bring up my ‘dangerously altruistic streak,’ as you’ve dubbed it, I do mean *you.*”

Will cannot look at Hannibal, because it’s only part of the truth. He can’t stop thinking about that day, when the perfectly poised doctor had come so unhinged that he broke through a solid wooden door with nothing but his own brutal strength. Sometimes, some sweaty, frantic nights, he has dreams about what would have happened had Jack not gotten there in time.

The fact that he does not know is becoming unbearable.

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Hannibal, an Alpha, is in love with Will, a Beta, and it's becoming a problem. Will offers to help the man through his rut, unaware of the true consequences of his actions.

Notes

So I decided to make a pseudonym. Every so often I write something like this that is... significantly different from the sort of thing I normally write, and I thought it would be prudent to keep them quasi-separated. Essentially, if you see something posted under this name, CHECK THE TAGS. As always, if there is anything that you feel should be tagged that I have missed or forgotten, please let me know!

Anyways, this. I conceived of, planned out and then wrote this all while out of my mind with the flu. I'm still a bit out of my mind which is probably why it's being posted at all. Regardless, this went in a direction I was not expecting. Being totally honest, I'm not a huge fan of omegaverse, which is probably why the one time I actually dove into it I ended up with whatever this is. I did try to research what I was not sure about but if there are any 'factual' errors they're just as likely to be things I flat out ignored as they are actual mistakes.

And finally- Will is absolutely, 100%, no twist endings a Beta. If you are expecting some sort of reveal where he isn't, don't be.

F or someone who spoke so rarely and quietly, Hannibal's absence was a palpable thing.

It's not like he was with them all of the time; he had his own practice to run, of course, but whenever his assistance was required he was more than happy to offer it. He always seemed so unaffected by everything around him, so when Jack had to awkwardly tell the room full of Betas that the man was in rut and unable to join them, the silence that followed was loaded.

It was Beverly who shattered it, something of her specialty. She simply shrugged. "Alpha's still an Alpha," she said cryptically.

Will coughed. "We can get by without him like before," he said pathetically.

Jack continued. "He's unmated, so it shouldn't be long. Couple days max, and told me he's willing to come in as soon as possible."

"Told you?" Zeller interjected with a frown. "Aren't they usually…" He made a comically exaggerated snarl.

Jack shot him an unimpressed look. "It's different for everyone. Now get back to work."

That was four days ago, and the case was proving quite difficult. Will was finding it harder and harder to focus without Hannibal to bounce ideas off of. This is why, he tells himself, he goes and finds Jack.

"It's been more than a couple days," he scowls the moment he enters the man's office.

Jack looks up from the pile of papers on his desk, a faint frown on his features that soon morphs into understanding. "Lecter," he thinks out loud, and Will nods. "It *has* been longer than expected, all things considered."

"Should somebody, I don't know, check up on him?"

"Are you offering?" Jack asks, eyebrow raised.

Will shrugs. "I don't know. If anyone knows about this, it's you."

The man sitting across from him sighs. "It couldn't hurt. He's not really the type to misjudge things. I've been considering it myself, honestly, but Alphas don't usually appreciate the presence of another Alpha during a rut."

"And I'm a nice, safe Beta," Will finishes. "Anything I should know before heading over?"

Now, it's Jack who shrugs. "He's told me he remains remarkably lucid during it, so you should be able to talk to him just fine. Could be jumpy or irritable, so I'd recommend trying not to piss him off quite as much as usual."

"I'll do my best," Will shoots back evenly. "Should I bring him something? Juice? Gatorade?"

“He’s prepared,” Jack sighs. “Look, Will. It’ll be a vulnerable time for him. I probably wouldn’t ask anyone *other* than you to check. Don’t break his trust, alright?”

Will is silent for a long moment as his brow furrows. “What the hell were you worried I would do, exactly?”

Jack throws his hands in the air. “I don’t know! Just wanted to put it out there. Call me if you need me, alright?”

“Yes, sir,” Will mutters before making his way back to the room he dropped his coat in.

“You heading out?” Price asks him as he enters the break room. He appears to be eating a sandwich.

Will nods. “Gonna go check on the good doctor. Not like we’re making any headway on our own.”

Zeller chimes in. “Does he need anything, do you think? Fruit?”

“Unmated Omegas?” Beverly slides in with a crooked smile. Will snorts.

“Don’t think he’d appreciate the gesture.”

“Doesn’t he live in Baltimore?” Zeller points out.

“Yeah, but he’s got another place nearby in Dale City. Should be holed up there.”

“Must be nice,” Price sighs. For a moment, all of them are silent. Wildly rich Alphas with second, third and even fourth homes were nothing new. Having a property to disappear to during rut was oddly common. “Still, Dale City?”

Everyone turns back to Will, who nearly flinches. “Why are you looking at me? I just have the address.”

“You’re the one who looks inside people’s heads,” Price points out.

“Plus, you get along the best with him,” Beverly adds.

Will *scowls.* “I’m leaving.” And he does.

He turns the thought over in his head as he drives. Why *did* Hannibal have a house in somewhere like Dale City? The only answer he can come up with is how much closer it is to Quantico, but he had only been aiding them for about six months. As far as Will knew, he had been brought on board around the same time as the other man, and no matter how often Jack insisted it was a coincidence it always seemed to ring hollow. For someone as proper and concerned with appearances as Hannibal, it was probably just a place to escape to, one nobody would expect of him.

Will sighs deeply as he turns onto the correct street. It wasn’t important.

This house was just as large and imposing as the first, though painted an amusingly quaint eggshell white. It even had cute little brown trim. Hannibal must not spend much time here after all if this is what the place still looked like. Inwardly, Will laughs. Get it out of his system before he breaks down in front of a much more irritable than usual Hannibal. He locks his car behind him and ascends the steps to knock on the door.

It's slow, but he does hear footsteps followed by the unlocking of the door. There is a brief, hanging moment where he wonders if he has the wrong address after all and then the door is opened inwards, revealing a very disheveled and oddly startled Hannibal. "Will," he manages.

"Uh," Will begins. He probably should have thought about what he would be saying beforehand. "Yeah, sorry, it's been a while, we were all sort of concerned."

"You shouldn't be here," Hannibal growls. His grip on the door tightens, but if anything, he opens it wider.

"I'll leave," Will says immediately. "I can leave. Just wanted to make sure everything was okay since you weren't…" Will trails off, because Hannibal is leaning forwards, mouth parting, and then he *inhales,* blatantly and unabashedly scenting Will . "That. Uh. You seem fine, I'm gonna…"

He gets a glimpse of Hannibal's face, eyes ringed with red, before strong hands are fisting into his jacket and hauling him inside the building. Hannibal kicks the door shut behind them.

Immediately, Hannibal presses Will up against the back of the door and buries his face in the man's neck, drawing out a very undignified squeak. "H-Hannibal," Will stutters, "what are you-" He feels the edge of teeth.

Will freezes, and then thanks his unbuttoned jacket and self-defense training as he twists out of the item and escapes entirely. "Okay, you're clearly-" He is interrupted by a frustrated growl, then Hannibal turning and advancing on him. "A-Alright, just calm down," he soothes, stumbling backwards. "I guess I pissed you off, maybe you smelled Jack on me or something? Just let me-" His foot catches on something and Will tumbles to the ground. He flips onto his knees to try to stand back up when all of a sudden his body is blanketed by another, Hannibal's hand on his upper back trying to force him to the floor.

Again, Will freezes, swallowing thickly as he feels the press of Hannibal's hard cock along his lower back. Anger, it seems, is not the emotion he has triggered in the other man.

He regains himself when he feels a button give on his shirt as Hannibal tries to tear it open. "Fuck, oh fuck, oh god-" He jerks an elbow back, apparently catching the man across the face from the hiss of pain it produces, and it loosens Hannibal's grip just long enough for Will to slip away. He runs into the first open room he can find and slams the door shut behind him.

Frantic, he scans the room, discovering that he appears to be in some sort of pantry. A pantry with a chair, strangely, but he wedges it under the doorknob without thinking about it too hard. It seems sturdy enough, and proves itself to be when Hannibal begins throwing himself against the door in an effort to break through.

Will fumbles for his phone, thanking his lucky stars he had it in the pocket of his jeans and not his jacket. He calls Jack. “I need help,” he rushes out the second the call connects. “Immediate help.”

“Where are you?” Jack replies, already moving.

“Hannibal’s place in Dale City.”

“Do you need an ambulance?”

“I need someone with a fucking tranq gun,” Will hisses, jumping at the loud crash of Hannibal against the door.

“Will,” Jack asks calmly. “What was that noise?”

“That was Hannibal trying to *break down the door of the room I’m hiding in.* ”

“He attacked you?” Jack sounds surprised.

Will winces. “You could say that.”

“Is there anything in there you could use for self defense? If you injured him to protect yourself, he would likely understand.”

Will laughs, borderline hysterically. “Oh, don’t worry. He’s not trying to kill me.”

Jack falls silent as it pieces together. “We’ll be there in twenty minutes.”

Another slam, and Will’s voice pitches up as he speaks. “How about faster? I wasn’t really planning on being *fucked today.* ”

“Fifteen. And what I told you- it still applies.” Jack disconnects the call, leaving Will alone with his panic and a slowly buckling door. He stares at the clock on his phone, counting the minutes to try and distract himself.

Thirteen minutes later, Hannibal breaks through the door.

The general frame of the door still remains- Hannibal had broken a hole clean through the center, large enough for him to fit an arm through to feel around for the object blocking his entry. Nothing Will beats against his arm seems to slow the man down, and he can only watch in horror as the chair is dislodged and the door finally swings inward.

Hannibal looks absolutely wild.

For a moment, they are both still, and then Hannibal is surging forward and pulling Will out by the hair. “Hannibal, please-” he desperately tries, unable to stop the man from throwing him back onto the floor. This time, Hannibal has pinned him thoroughly. “Don’t do this, you’re not yourself right now, Hannibal, *please-”* Broad hands fist in the halves of his shirt, ripping it open and sending the buttons flying across the room. Hannibal has pulled it part

way off Will's chest when there is another thunderous crash as Hannibal's front door flies open, revealing Jack along with a very panicked looking trio of Beverly, Price and Zeller.

Instantly, Hannibal drops his body with a warning growl, flattening Will completely to the floor. The action digs his cock into Will's ass, making his pulse jump in his throat. "Woah woah woah," Beverly murmurs, halting in place when a small step forward causes Hannibal's hands to tighten painfully where they are pinning down Will's arms. "Hannibal, you in there?"

"Are you okay?" Jack asks carefully, eyes locked onto Will. "Did he-"

"No, he- I still have my pants on," Will finishes, voice shaking. It wasn't the smartest thing to say since Hannibal does appear to still retain his ability to hear, based on the way one of his hands slips free and immediately moves to rectify the problem.

"Hey!" Jack says sharply, and when Will and Hannibal glance up at him, he has a gun pointed toward the other Alpha.

"Don't shoot him!" Will shouts. "Please, it's not his fault-"

"Let him go, doctor." Jack steps forward, and Hannibal's growling ramps up. "He's not your mate, or an Omega. You're just confused."

Hannibal stiffens above Will, and with a sickening realization Will understands what is about to happen. *He's not your mate,* echoes through his head. "Don't-" Will isn't sure which of them he's speaking to but before anyone can react, Hannibal pushes his head down onto the floor to expose his neck, leans down, and bites.

The sharp report of a gun precedes the loosening of the jaws buried into his neck, muffled by Will's cry of pain. He sees blood, so much blood, feels Hannibal's limp body above him, his breathing picks up and-

"Will!" Beverly cries, grabbing the man by the arms and physically pulling him out from under Hannibal. "Will, it's okay! Look!"

Will turns his blurred gaze back towards Hannibal, covered in blood, and then he blinks. The blood vanishes, instead revealing a colorful dart sticking out of the now unconscious man's neck. "You-" he begins, only for it to choke off into a hiss of pain. His neck *really* hurts. How deeply had the man bitten?

"It's meant for taking down an Alpha in rut," Jack explains, "but there's no way of knowing how long it will keep him under. Get Will out of here, *now.* "

"Hospital," Zeller mutters, looking something up on his phone. "We need a hospital."

Price waves a hand in front of Will's face. "You okay there?" He hands Beverly a clean towel, and she presses down on the wound with it.

"What the fuck do you think?" Will hisses, wincing as the movement sends a jolt of pain up his neck.

“So that’s a no.”

“Will, keys,” Beverly prompts. “I can drive us there in your car.”

“In my jacket, wherever that ended up.”

“Got it,” Zeller chimes in, picking it up off the floor of the entranceway. “Jack, do you…”

“All of you, go,” Jack rumbles, eyes flashing. “I’ll stay to make sure he isn’t injured.” *And to have a very important conversation with him,* Will sees unsaid, hovering just beyond the man’s steely gaze.

“Is he gonna be-”

“ *Go,”* Jack orders, eyes flashing red as he uses his Voice. It does nothing to the group of Betas, but it’s certainly intimidating.

Will looks at him, meets his gaze, and turns away with a sharp inhale. *The longer you’re here, the worse it will be for him.*

In the end, Price drives as Zeller navigates, Beverly in the back, holding the towel so tightly over the wound Will half thinks he’s going to be choked to death before they even make it to the hospital.

Will is lucky enough that the bite wound doesn’t need stitches, though it’s close. They keep him overnight, just for observation.

“What exactly are you trying to observe?” he had argued with the nurse, who didn’t quite meet his eyes.

“You were given a mating bite,” she tells him, keeping her calm admirably. “It’s standard procedure.”

“I wasn’t given a mating anything *,” Will grinds out. The painkillers are wearing off and the pain is grating on him. “I’m pretty sure my chart will tell you I’m a Beta. Do you think I’m magically going to present as an Omega in my mid-thirties?”*

“No,” the nurse answers quickly. “This is just… an unusual situation, and one that we would prefer to monitor. You will be free to go in the morning.”

The conversation had circled for quite some time before Will had given up. Ultimately, he should have known better than to try and out-argue an ER nurse, but he can never quite give up that side of himself.

Surprisingly, it’s Jack who meets him in the morning. “Let’s get breakfast,” he tells Will, and it doesn’t *sound* optional. Will sighs and accepts.

“So…” Jack starts awkwardly, halfway through the meal.

“I think they were worried I’d grow a uterus overnight,” Will interrupts. It actually makes Jack *laugh.*

“Standard procedure, I’m sure. Will.” Will looks up, but not at Jack. “What happened?”

“I.” Will looks back down, pushing the eggs around on his plate. “I have no idea.”

“Walk me through it.”

He sets his fork down. “I knocked, Hannibal opened the door. Looked like total shit, by the way. Seemed startled to see me.”

“Was he lucid?”

Will nods. “At first. He told me- that I shouldn’t be there. Seemed strange, and I *was* going to leave, but then he-”

“He scented you?” Jack guesses, and Will looks up in surprise. Something about the look in the man’s face makes him uneasy. “I was afraid this might be the case. When Doctor Lecter woke, he was angry, but came back to his senses pretty quickly.”

“Christ, is he okay?”

“Will,” Jack sighs, urging the twitchy man to focus. “He came back to himself because before he woke I spent an hour ensuring every trace of your scent was eradicated from his house.”

“My… scent?” Will looks down at himself, raising an arm to check if he has a foul odor. “Do I smell?” When he looks back up, Jack looks incredibly unimpressed.

“Everything has a smell. Even without pheromones, Betas still have their own unique scent. Lecter has an unusually sensitive nose, even for an Alpha, so I imagine it is much more obvious to him.”

“Do I-” Will glances around before leaning in closer and lowering his voice. “Do I smell like an Omega?”

Jack looks like he wants to strangle Will, somewhat. Will can see the exact moment when he decides that beating around the bush is helping no one. “You sent Lecter into rut.”

For several seconds, Will both sees and hears absolutely nothing. When he comes back to himself, all he can say is “I’m sorry?”

“He told me he wasn’t even due for a few months, Will. It’s the reason it’s been longer as well.”

“Oh my god,” Will murmurs, bringing his hands to his head. “So this is *my* fault?”

“How the *hell* is that your takeaway here? Will, look at me.” Jack falls silent until Will raises his head. “None of this is your fault. If an Alpha has violent ruts, it’s their responsibility to warn people about it.”

“Then why didn’t he?”

Suddenly, Jack falls silent. “He’ll want to speak with you anyways. I think it’s better if you asked him directly.”

A thought hits Will. “Is he still…” Jack nods. “Is it bad?” He can tell from the way Jack grimaces that it must be.

“While unpaired ruts are never enjoyable, I imagine for one that was triggered it would be significantly worse.” Will is silent for long enough that Jack catches onto his thought process. “You are *not* allowed to suggest what you’re about to suggest.”

“He’s clearly interested!” Will protests, but it’s weak.

“You need to take a good, long look at why you’re considering this in the first place.”

Again, Will is silent for a long time. “I just don’t want him to suffer,” he finally admits.

“It’s a moot point,” Jack grumbles. “He refused any assistance I offered.” At Will’s look, he quickly elaborates. “I could have found someone to help him with meals and staying hydrated.”

“Is he some sort of repenting monk?” Will mutters.

“If you don’t want him to suffer, wait for him to approach you first,” Jack says flatly.

Will, grudgingly, agrees.

It takes three increasingly anxiety-filled days for Hannibal to emerge from his rut and make his way back to Quantico. When Will crosses paths with him in a hallway he does a triple-take. “Are you real?” he asks the man, who appears to be holding two warm thermoses.

“As far as I am aware,” he counters with a hesitant smile.

“Good. I don’t recognize that suit and I don’t think I’m ready to accept the fact that I can hallucinate your bizarre wardrobe.” Hannibal, looking rather fond, extends one of the thermoses towards Will. “Whiskey?”

“Coffee,” Hannibal corrects. Will takes it anyways. “Will, we need to-”

“-talk, yeah,” Will finishes, taking a long sip. It’s miles better than the instant slop they have in the break room, always has been. His eyes flutter closed in appreciation. When they open,

Hannibal is wearing a faint expression that makes him think he shouldn't have done that. He swallows. "Uh, now?"

Hannibal seems to consider that. "If Jack is amenable, now would be a good time." He turns, but Will's hand on his shoulder halts him.

"Wait, Jack? Why does Jack need to be involved?"

The man's eyes fall to Will's hand on his shoulder, which he removes with a jolt. "I attacked you, Will. I do believe some supervision would be warranted."

"I guess," Will concedes, and this time when Hannibal turns to leave, Will does not stop him. Instead, he follows.

Jack, thankfully, is free, and they end up settled into an interrogation room of all places. It gives them the illusion of privacy, even though Jack is simply watching from the other side of the glass. "This is awkward," Will mutters, hands drumming along the table where he sits across from Hannibal.

"The location or the circumstances?"

"Yes," Will fires back.

Hannibal seems to deflate, as much as a man of his bearing ever would. "Will, I cannot apologize enough. I am truly sorry for what transpired."

"Why?" Will asks suddenly.

Hannibal looks mildly taken aback. "I thought that much would be obvious, but if you wish to hear me say it-"

"No, not that." Will waves a hand dismissively. "Why did it happen in the first place? Do you usually have violent-" The word sticks in his throat.

"Violent ruts," Hannibal finishes helpfully. Will slowly nods his head. "Not previously, though I have never had a rut out of season before, so I suppose I cannot truly say." His eyes keep dropping to Will's neck, where the white bandage is taped over the healing mark.

"And it was really triggered by…" Will can't bring himself to finish the sentence, taking a long drink of the coffee instead. It really is quite good.

Hannibal, for better or for worse, has never had the same trouble with words that Will does, and there is no hesitation in his response. "By you, yes."

"Right. So now we're back to 'why'. Do I smell particularly good or something?"

"You do not smell any better or worse than another Beta." Again, his eyes are locked on Will's neck.

"Okay, so I smell like everybody else."

“That is not what I said.”

Will is starting to get a bit irritated with Hannibal’s tendency to dance around a point until his feet bleed. “Then what *do* I smell like? Wet dog?”

Hannibal closes his eyes and inhales deeply. *At least he kept his mouth closed this time,* Will thinks to himself dryly. “A stream. The forest. Motor oil, fresh fish, and nervous sweat.” Hannibal’s eyes open, and he looks lost. “And yes, there is some dog.”

“You got a thing for fish guts?” Before Hannibal can vocalize whatever comeback he was working on, Will continues talking. “So, it’s the way I smell, got it. Could I wear scent-dampening deodorant or something? Would that even help?”

“While I appreciate the gesture, they work by blocking pheromones, and would do nothing. In any case, changing or hiding your scent would not work to begin with.”

“Why not? Scent’s a big thing for you, isn’t it?”

“Will.” Hannibal’s eyes finally snap back up, meet Will’s, and he finds he cannot look away. “I am not affected because I enjoy the scent of trees or water. I am affected because the scent belongs to you.”

Everything snaps into place, and before he can stop himself the words are flying out from his lips. “Hannibal, are you... in *love* with me?”

“Since the moment we met,” the man easily replies.

It feels like he’s been punched in the gut, in a way. “I-” Words don’t seem to want to materialize, so he falls back on something that never seems to leave him- good old fashioned blunt honesty. “I don’t know how to respond to that.”

“Does it disgust you?”

Will’s head flies up, eyes wide. “Of course not, what kind of a person do you-”

Hannibal cuts him off. “Do you hate me?”

“No,” Will exhales, more certain of that than anything at the moment.

“Then you do not need to.”

“Is that really okay?” Will frowns.

“My intention was only to provide an explanation,” Hannibal says coolly. “I do not require any sort of response.”

When he speaks, Will’s voice is quiet. “Would you have ever told me?” he murmurs. “If this hadn’t happened.”

Unexpectedly, Hannibal is silent for a while. “I did not wish to risk our current relationship and had no plans to do so.”

Something about it enrages Will, the total acceptance of an outcome he has apparently decided is unavoidable. For a moment, he forgets the subject of their conversation entirely. “That’s no reason to just give up,” he snorts. “You never seemed like the type to throw in the towel that quickly.”

Hannibal’s gaze sharpens. “What are you trying to say, Will?”

All at once, Will remembers that this conversation is, in fact, about *him*. “Uh, I…” Hannibal’s eyes drop once more, to his neck, and whatever words he was planning on saying flee his body entirely. “Alright, you keep looking.” He raises a hand, points a finger at the bandage. “At *this* . Are you feeling guilty, or do you just want to see the mark you left?”

When the man across from him meets his gaze, his reddish-brown eyes seem a shade brighter than usual. “Yes,” he says slowly, the word dripping from his tongue like honey.

Will swallows. He allows his hand to drift closer, fingers slip under the bandage near the tape holding it in place. When he stands, it feels like someone else is moving his body. Hannibal stands with him.

He barely even hears Jack pounding on the glass window to the other room. Slowly, he peels the bandage away, turns, and tilts his head forward to fully expose the mark.

He never even hears Hannibal move. One moment he is standing and the next he is being pressed flat against the wall, a strong hand ensuring his head remains tilted and his neck continues to be bared. There is a hot breath at his neck as Hannibal parts his jaws and leans in, panting heavily, teeth coming closer, tongue reaching out to-

And then there is nothing but a rush of cool air as Hannibal is pulled forcefully off of him, a pair of hands around his shoulders as he is marched out of the room, Jack slamming the door behind them. At least this time, Hannibal doesn’t seem to feel the need to throw himself against it.

“Are you *insane?* ” Jack grinds out, fury obvious on his face. “What the hell are you doing?”

Will is trembling, finally realizing what he had nearly done. “I-I don’t know.”

“Do you *want* to send him right back into rut?”

“Of course not!” Will forces out. “I just-” He sags against the wall. “I don’t know what came over me.”

Jack softens, barely. “Look, Will, I’m not going to tell you that you need to watch yourself around him, because that’s not your responsibility in any way. But maybe *don’t* do things like blatantly show off the mating bite he tried to give you when he’s fresh out of a rut?” Will nods dumbly. “If you want to explore the possibility of a relationship with-”

Will cuts Jack off before he can even finish. “We’re not talking about this.”

Sighing, Jack backs away. “Don’t be a dumbass, Will.”

“Understood.”

“Go back to work. Lecter will join you after he’s had some time to cool off.”

The thought of cooling off brings something back to the forefront of his mind. “I left my coffee in there.”

The look Jack gives him could kill an entire garden, but to his credit, he does retrieve it for him.

When Hannibal finally joins everyone, the room is tense for nearly an hour before it finally starts to loosen up. With a fresh pair of eyes and Will no longer slowly sliding into near uselessness, the case is wrapped within the week.

With nothing important to focus on, Will is instead left with plenty of time to dwell on the curious, if not alarming, shift in Hannibal’s behavior.

The psychiatrist is making frequent visits to Quantico. Not daily, but multiple times a week despite the total lack of any actual reason for him to be there. Every time he shows up with an extra thermos of coffee or a second bag of lunch, always for Will, who has never been one to turn down free food. While he has always been a rather physical person, Hannibal still seems to be making extra effort to touch Will- never anything that lingers into inappropriate, at least on the surface. When he hands Will a cup his fingers drag along the other man’s wrist. When they walk down the hallway side by side, his hand always seems to rest on Will’s shoulder, quickly brushing along the base of his neck before he pulls away. The touches are so brief but so constant that Will does not truly know what to make of them.

It’s when he comes back into his office to prepare for his next lesson and finds a single, perfect calla lily laying across his desk that he decides he really, really needs a drink. If he fills an empty whiskey bottle full of water to use as a makeshift vase, well, Hannibal will just have to learn to deal with the indignation.

He doesn’t dress up to go to the bar, he never does, so it’s always something of a surprise when people approach him. The woman is quite pretty, long dark hair and an hourglass figure, and he’s just deciding it wouldn’t hurt to lean into it when her eyes fall to the not quite healed bite on the back on his neck and her entire body tenses. “I’m so sorry,” she stammers. “I didn’t even realize you were an Omega, much less bonded.”

Will almost wants to ask her why she jumped straight to Omega, but he goes to something more relevant instead- “I’m not and it’s not a-” But she isn’t listening, already backing away lest she incur the wrath of his nonexistent Alpha. “Not a mating mark,” he mutters, mostly into his drink.

It should have been a briefly disappointing but ultimately meaningless encounter, except it seems to have made its way around the room because he suddenly finds himself being approached by, of all things, a procession of Alphas. He can count the number of times one has approached him in his entire life on one hand, but they seem determined to at the very least double that record through tonight alone. As the stereotype goes, they are relentless in their advances, overwhelming and aggressive.

“Shame you ain’t an Omega,” one of them growls at him. “I’d keep you so full of pups you’d barely be able to get outta bed.”

Will pulls a face at that. “Is that supposed to be flattering?”

“Our kids woulda been beautiful.”

“The human race will simply have to learn to live with the loss,” Will grumbles. “Now get the hell away from me.”

He’s chased a fourth one away when he hears someone plop down on the stool next to him and he turns, ready to up it to five, only to stop when he sees who it is.

A stranger, like the rest, but instead it is a slender, beautiful man, the unmistakable pattern of a mating bite on his neck. *Omega,* Will’s mind supplies. He shoots Will a grin that is somehow both cherubic and wicked. “You look like you need someone to complain to.”

“Won’t say no to that,” Will mutters, signalling the bartender for another drink. The Omega orders one as well.

“Alphas, am I right?” The sheer magnitude of the cliche makes Will laugh into his beer. “But really, it sure looked like they wouldn’t leave you alone.”

“Don’t even understand why,” Will grumbles. “Is there a sign on my back? *Open for business, Alphas only?* ”

Beside him, the Omega frowns. “You, uh. I mean, there may as well be. You really are a Beta, aren’t you?”

“Yes?” Will frowns. “Great. What is it this time?”

The Omega laughs, a light, pleasant sound. “You’ve got a big fucking bite mark on your neck, if you haven’t noticed.”

Automatically, Will’s hand flies up to cover said mark. “I’m aware.”

“Yeah, and then you outright told someone you weren’t actually attached, and you absolutely *stink* of Alpha so it’s not like your orientation is up for debate.”

It’s possible the Omega kept talking, but all Will hears is a dull buzzing in his ears. A hand on his shoulder, shaking lightly, snaps him out of it. “Hey, dude, you okay?”

“Run that by me again?”

“You… stink of Alpha?”

Will allows his head to connect with the bar. Of *course* Hannibal had been scent marking him. Of fucking *course* he had. “I shouldn’t even be surprised,” he mutters.

“Woah, okay, I just assumed you slept with one, but there’s way more layers to this, aren’t there? Wanna talk about it?”

No, Will thinks, but he’s already opening his mouth and then everything comes spilling out.

“Wait,” the Omega cuts in towards the end, cackling. “You sent him into *rut?* ”

“It wasn’t supposed to be funny,” Will shoots back.

“Yeah, sorry, being attacked is never amusing, maybe sexy in the right circumstances but- look at me for a second.” Will obeys, meeting the Omega’s gaze, and- *he’s worried, insecure, feels like he let her down, he’s absolutely terrified of being thrown away again-* “Alright, I can see it.”

“Do I look like an Omega?” Will blurts out.

The man next to him blinks slowly, brain trying to catch up to the abrupt change in topic. “Uh, you could pass for either, honestly, but an Alpha wouldn’t be moping alone at the bar.”

Will shrugs. “I’ve been known to fall far short of expectations.”

It sends the Omega into another laughing fit, and even Will smiles in response. “So what, and now he’s courting you?”

“Blatantly,” Will sighs. “Going really overboard with the gifts, though until now they’ve all been edible. Keeps doing it despite the fact that I haven’t even acknowledged it. Not sure if he thinks I haven’t caught on or what.”

The Omega slouches onto the bar, fixing Will with a conspiratorial grin. “Then what was today?”

When Will speaks it’s into his drink and incomprehensible, causing the Omega to cup a hand around his ear in a rather comical fashion. “Calla lily,” Will finally admits, cheeks darkening a bit at the memory.

“Oh, wow,” the Omega sighs. “What’d you do with it?”

“Makeshift vase. He left it on my desk, so that’s where I put it.”

There is a stretch of silence, and Will looks up to see what made the talkative Omega so suddenly quiet. He’s looking at Will with some mixture of fond exasperation and complete and utter bafflement. “You *dolt* ,” the man admonishes softly, “he keeps doing it because it’s *working.* ”

Will wants to reply but finds the words have once more left him. Before they return, the Omega's gaze is drawn upwards, and they soften so quickly and utterly that Will knows he can only be looking at his Alpha.

The woman that approaches them is short for an Alpha, couldn't be more than five foot five, but her presence is so overwhelming that Will nearly shies away from it. "Ricky," she sighs, voice deep and smoky. "I thought ya were gonna make me check every bar in this damn city."

The Omega- Ricky, apparently- shoots her an apologetic smile. "Sorry, Jess."

"Ya don't have to run away every time we have an argument." She shakes her head, the hair falling in waves to her shoulder shifting just enough to reveal a mating bite. "Now c'mon. Let's go home."

"Yes, ma'am," though it's said with a fondly mocking tone as the man springs up off his stool. He slaps the money for his tab on the counter, enough to cover it and add a generous tip. "Nice talking to you, uh-"

"Will," he introduces, holding out a hand for an extremely belated greeting.

The hand that grasps his is soft but confident. "Ricky, though I'm sure you've picked up on that by now."

The Alpha- Jess, Will reminds himself- now turns to him as well. "Thank ya for entertainin' him."

"I feel like I should be thanking him," Will murmurs.

"Might want to head out now unless you're looking to take an Alpha out for a test drive," Ricky says cheerily, and Will chokes on his drink. "They've been circling for a while now."

Jess tenses up, adjusting her posture subtly to be ready for a fight at a moment's notice. "Ya bein' bothered?"

"I'll be fine," Will assures the Alpha, though she doesn't entirely relax.

"Suit yerself," she says with a shrug. With a little wave from Ricky, the couple departs.

Will can see several men shifting towards him in the corners of his vision. He flags down the bartender, pays his tab, and hurries out of the building before anyone can properly approach him.

Before he goes to sleep, Will shoots Hannibal a text. *busy tomorrow?* It's Friday night, so barring a new case, Will has absolutely fuck all to do.

I am free, comes the reply.

good. need to talk 2 u

Is something the matter? Trust Hannibal to pick up on his irritation, even through text.

There's no harm in giving Hannibal some warning, and Will is just tipsy enough to be snappy. *what the fuck do you think mr marks-a-lot*

I believe that should be Doctor Marks-A-Lot, if we are aiming for accuracy.

The sheer brazenness, of the jab, of the flirting, of *Hannibal himself* forces laughter out of Will. *yeah sorry doctor thought I wouldn't even notice the scent marking*

In my defense, it took you nearly a month to find out.

doctor thought he was being so smooth

How about doctor makes you dinner tomorrow night?

Will's breath catches in his chest. That is, unmistakably, an invitation on a date. *yeah dinner sounds good* he sends before he can stop himself.

The reply is lightning fast, and he can't help imagining Hannibal staring at his phone, waiting for Will's reply. *Would 7 work?*

which house richie rich

Baltimore, of course.

7 is good

Then I will see you tomorrow, at 7.

should I bring wine or something

You need only bring yourself.

Will shakes his head in disbelief; he doesn't know what kind of a response he had been expecting if it wasn't that. Winston stares at him, judging. "Bad dog," Will jokes, regretting it instantly when Winston's entire body droops and he lays down with a whine. "No, Winston, come here, I was kidding, you're such a good boy-" Winston jumps up on the bed so quickly that Will half suspects this was his plan all along. The dog is panting happily when he finally picks up his phone to continue the conversation. *don't you want a real gift or something*

I could think of nothing I want more.

Will groans, tipping his head back against the pillow with a dull thud. "I'm in trouble, aren't I?" he asks Winston, who woofs softly in answer.

alright that was a little smooth he sends back, and then he turns his phone off before Hannibal gets a chance to reply.

Will doesn't *intentionally* dress up for dinner with Hannibal, or at least that's the lie he tells himself. If he shows up in nice dark slacks, a cobalt blue button-up and a dark silver blazer, well, it's not something that needs to be commented on.

Hannibal doesn't point it out, but it might be because he looks a little bit struck dumb. He steps aside to let the other man in without even a word of greeting.

At some point he seems to regain his ability to speak, right after he peels Will out of his jacket and very obviously leans in for a sniff. "Dinner will be finished shortly."

The entire house smells absolutely amazing. "Anything I can do to help?" Will offers.

It seems like, for a moment, Hannibal is going to refuse the offer, but he tilts his head and, apparently, changes his mind. "If you would not mind setting the table."

"I'm not going to be able to tell your forks apart," Will warns him. In response, Hannibal shoots him a small smile.

"I trust that you will be able to figure it out."

Maybe it wasn't meant to be a challenge, but Will takes it as one. Hannibal hasn't even taken any of the silverware out, so Will is forced to peer around the kitchen as subtly as possible to figure out the sort of dishes they will be eating. Based on the way he sees Hannibal trying to smother a smile, he's a lot less subtle about it than he'd like to be.

There's always a bunch of forks, so he grabs all of them that he can see along with knives and a broad spoon for the soup he thinks he saw. When he makes it to the table, he sees the settings marked off and considers his options.

He's ended up with three different types of forks. The largest must be for the main course, so he places it closest to where the plate must go, the knife resting opposite. The remaining forks he puts next to the dinner one, extending outward and decreasing in size as they go. It looks a bit too lopsided if the spoon follows, so it ends up next to the knife. Will steps back and shrugs- looks good enough to him.

When he makes it back into the kitchen Hannibal tips his head towards a bottle of wine, freshly opened. It doesn't take long for Will to locate the glasses and this time, before he can make it back, Hannibal is bringing two plates of a fresh and colorful salad and placing them onto the table. He takes a moment to peer at the place settings.

"Well?" Will says. "How did I do?"

"Quite well, in fact," Hannibal murmurs, reaching down and plucking up the tiny, three-pronged fork. "Though this is an oyster fork, and will not be something we need."

Will makes sure to eat his salad with the oyster fork, something that seems to amuse Hannibal more than it irritates him.

They're on the main course (a very hearty stew, warm and pleasantly savory) when Will decides to bring it up. "So," he begins, but adds nothing.

“So,” Hannibal echos.

Bringing it up feels a great deal more awkward in person. “You’ve been, uh. Leaving your scent all over me.”

It’s a remarkably poor way to phrase it, something Hannibal seems to agree with based on the noticeable pause before he speaks. “I have been scent-marking you, yes.”

“Any particular reason why?” The looks Hannibal gives him is vaguely exasperated. “Right, sorry, let me rephrase that. You’re not really the type to do things like that without asking.”

“My answer, I must warn you, will sound like an excuse.” Will nods, encouraging Hannibal to continue. “I simply cannot help it.”

“Really? You’re blaming it on instincts?” Will takes a long pull of the wine, larger than is technically proper. “You’re right. It does sound like an excuse.”

“Not quite instincts.” Will peers up at Hannibal curiously. “When I think of you carrying my scent, the way any Alpha passing by will know who you belong to- I find my body moving before I can consciously make the decision.”

Will’s throat suddenly feels dry. “That sure sounds like instincts to me. If it’s not, what would you call that?”

“Hedonism.” Hannibal takes a sip of his wine, eyes never leaving Will’s face as he struggles with a reply.

“I don’t… *belong* to you,” he finally murmurs.

“Of course not,” Hannibal agrees. “I did not say the urge was rational.”

“Yeah, well, it worked,” Will says, almost off-handedly, and Hannibal’s eyes sharpen.

“Oh?”

Will winces. “I went to a bar last night- not with the intention of hooking up with anyone,” he hurriedly amends once Hannibal's expression darkens. “But someone *did* approach me, and mistook me for a… mated Omega when they saw the bite.”

Instantly, a purr springs to life deep in Hannibal’s chest, but the man has the grace to cover it with a polite cough until he can end it more forcefully. Will spares him the sharp words he wants to say, but doesn’t save him from the equally barbed look. “How curious.”

“You know what’s *more* curious? What happened next. Word got out that I *wasn’t* spoken for, so all the… gifts you left on me turned into a giant neon sign reading *lonely single male, looking for an Alpha to run him into the ground.* ”

It’s a little bit funny how tightly it makes Hannibal grip his silverware, though he keeps his face impressively passive. “That was… not my intention.”

“I imagine not.”

Hannibal remains silent for a moment. “It may be best if I refrained, in the future. To save you from further harassment.”

What he says next, Will blames on the wine. The wine he’s had no more than a glass of, the wine that hasn’t even made him the slightest bit tipsy. “I didn’t say I wanted you to stop.”

He swears that, for a moment, he sees a flash of red in Hannibal’s eyes.

They manage to get through dinner without any excitement, and then Hannibal is talking Will into dessert and a nightcap in the study, by the fire. Will finds he doesn’t really need to be talked into much of anything. What he also finds is that brandy makes his tongue far too loose. “I’m going to suggest something,” he says slowly, Hannibal’s eyes locked onto him. “And you’re going to choke down your protests until I’m finished.” Blessedly, Hannibal remains silent. “When. Uh. When’s your next rut? Did the surprise one reset your counter? That’s a question, you can answer that.”

“It does not ‘reset’ anything. I am due in two and a half month’s time.”

“Two and a half months,” Will says, mostly to himself. “Alright. I want to help you through your next rut.”

Predictably, Hannibal interrupts him immediately. “Absolutely not.”

Will glares at the man sitting in an armchair across the room. As usual, he’s standing, roaming the area restlessly. “What did I tell you about staying quiet?”

“Do you understand what you are offering involves sleeping with me?”

“Hannibal, I’m not an idiot.”

“I could not allow it.”

“Do you *not* want to sleep with me? Is this some platonic obsession?”

“Far from it.”

“Then why the fuck not?”

“If you are offering this out of some sort of misguided sense of responsibility-”

“I’m offering it because I want to!” Will cuts in, voice rising. For a second, they both fall silent. “Hannibal, look.” Frustrated, Will collapses into a chair. “I’m not trying to be cruel, I promise you. The… idea, that you are suffering while I could… lessen it. It’s unbearable.” Hannibal is opening his mouth, but Will raises a hand to ask him to wait. “And before you bring up my ‘dangerously altruistic streak,’ as you’ve dubbed it, I do mean *you.”*

Will cannot look at Hannibal, because it’s only part of the truth. He can’t stop thinking about that day, when the perfectly poised doctor had come so unhinged that he broke through a

solid wooden door with nothing but his own brutal strength. Sometimes, some sweaty, frantic nights, he has dreams about what would have happened had Jack not gotten there in time.

The fact that he does not know is becoming unbearable.

It takes a while for Hannibal to respond, and when he finally does, his voice is uncharacteristically subdued. “I do not want you as a simple bedwarmer, Will.”

The way he says it, so soft and vulnerable, sends a sharp pain through Will’s heart. He places his empty glass of brandy on a side table, stands, and moves until he stands before a Hannibal who will not meet his eyes. “Hannibal,” he sighs. “Hey, look at me.” Slowly, the man obeys. “I’m not going to lie to you. I don’t… know how to quantify the way I feel about you. But if I’m willing to spend a rut with you, surely that must count for *something?* ”

“I’ll hurt you.” *Will,* he says, not *might.*

“Then we have two and a half months to figure out how to circumvent that. We’re smart. We can make this work.”

“Will, I-”

Will is sick of listening to protests and excuses, and so he places his hands along Hannibal’s jaw, leans down, and kisses him.

Hannibal makes a broken sort of noise, and for a moment everything is soft- then Hannibal’s hand is buried in Will’s curls, another on the small of his back pulling him down and into Hannibal’s lap. His head is tilted and Hannibal’s sharp fangs are digging into his lip, a nip drawing blood, which Hannibal licks away greedily. There is a low, rumbling growl-

And then Will is being shoved backward, barely able to get his feet back under him and keep himself from falling to the ground. “Can you drive?” Hannibal asks him, voice low and fracturing.

Will is stunned and more than a little confused. “I, uh, yeah, I should be-”

“Leave.”

For a moment, Will feels the sting of rejection, and then Hannibal looks up at him and the red around his eyes is so thick it nearly covers the iris entirely. “Please, Will.”

“Oh, christ, okay, I’m going, I’m sorry-”

“Don’t apologize,” Hannibal manages to force out. “I will call you. Tomorrow.”

Will nods, short, rapid motions, and stumbles backwards out of the room, leaving Hannibal by the fire.

The entire drive home all he can think about is the coppery taste of blood.

Hannibal does call him the next day, endless apologies that Will outright ignores until they stop arriving. Their conversation relaxes into something nicer, until one of Will's dogs knocks over something very large and he is forced to end the call. They did not, he notices, talk about the rut in any way.

The next day, at work, Hannibal greets him with coffee and gentle touches, and it's like nothing changed at all.

Until, that is, Will is attempting to leave for the day and Hannibal finds him in the parking lot.

He's carrying, of all things, a gift bag. Will accepts it silently, nearly dropping the object when it turns out to be much heavier than he anticipated. It's a sleek black bag, weirdly elegant gold-embossed tissue paper sticking out of the top and obscuring the contents. "Am I supposed to open this now?" He moves his free hand towards the tissue paper, only for Hannibal to catch his wrist and halt him.

"At home," he answers, releasing Will.

"Well, uh. Thank you? I guess?"

Hannibal is looking at him with amusement. "You may wish to hold onto that thank you until you are certain you wish to give it."

Will looks at the bag in his hand with a newfound suspicion. "This better not be anything illegal."

"Above board, I assure you."

He carefully fits the bag into his trunk. "Whatever you say."

When he gets home, he drops it on the counter, momentarily forgotten until the dogs are tended to. Immediately after, he pulls the tissue paper out, takes one look inside, and calls Hannibal.

"Hello, Will," the man greets.

"Hannibal, what the *fuck?* "

Hannibal falls silent. "If I have misinterpreted your offer-"

"No, you absolutely did not, but I'm a little thrown by the *giant bag of dildos* you just gave me."

"As you are surely aware, your body will not naturally be ready to-"

"Where did you even *buy* a half gallon of artificial slick?" It explained the weight of the bag, at least.

“It was all bought together.”

“Great, so you went out of your way to *buy me* a bag of dildos.”

“Would you prefer they had been used?”

“I would have prefered some sort of warning.”

There is a beat of silence. “Have you looked at them?”

“What, like individually?”

“I would like to know if there is anything more you feel you require.”

“You just want to experience my reaction,” Will mutters, but he takes the bag upstairs into his bedroom and shuts the door behind him. He puts Hannibal on speaker, throws the phone onto his pillow, and upends the contents of the gift bag onto his bed.

Compulsively, he arranges them in order of size. There are several smaller implements, prostate massagers from the look of them, and then a slender, beaded object, tapering to a wider base. The dildos cover a wide range of shapes and sizes, everything from simple tubes to realistic objects complete with fake testicles. “Have you ever experimented with anal play, Will?” Hannibal asks him like he’s asking what he ate for breakfast.

Will picks up a string of anal beads and flicks the ring attached to the base. Unbidden, he sees a vision of ripping them out of someone like he’s revving a lawnmower, and drops them back down with a wince. “Are we really going to talk about this?”

“It is necessary.”

“Nope. Never really had the time for experimentation, as you call it.”

The silence stretches for so long Will thinks the call may have gotten disconnected, but when he checks Hannibal still appears to be on the line. “Hannibal? You there?”

“I am here,” comes the incredibly strangled answer.

“Oh,” Will laughs, “you *really* like that idea. Do you really want me to be doing this all on my own?”

“It would not be wise for me to assist you,” which means the answer is a resounding *no*. “There is no point in allowing time for prep if you drive me back into rut the moment it is started.”

Will picks up one of the plugs, trying to ignore the way hearing Hannibal finally outright admit what Will does to him makes him feel. “Alright, so what’s my goal here?”

“At first, simply to get used to the sensation.”

“So start with one of these massagers?”

“No,” Hannibal answers sharply.

A slow smile blossoms across Will’s face. “That’s strange,” he says sweetly, dragging out each word. “You bought them for me, but you don’t want me to use them?”

“You will not come until I make you,” Hannibal growls, and Will can almost see the man’s eyes flash red.

It’s so controlling, so blatantly *possessive* that it forms a lump in Will’s throat. “I’m not going to edge myself for close to three months, Hannibal.”

Hannibal seems to come back to himself. “Of course. What I *meant* to say is that I do not want you to come from anal stimulation, or even with anything inside of you. You are free to masturbate.”

“You want to be there for the first time, hmm?”

“Yes,” comes the simple answer. Sometimes, Will forgets that Hannibal does not appear to feel shame.

“Okay, so start small and work my way up. What are the plugs for?”

“Based on our previous encounters, I believe that once my rut begins I will likely attempt to mount you with no preparation. You can keep yourself prepared and wear the plug to ease the process.”

The way Hannibal said it managed to make it sound like mere practicality, but it did nothing to distract Will from how fucking *filthy* it was. He’d be keeping himself available and ready, open and wet for Hannibal to use whenever he desired. It’s finally starting to hit home what he has offered to the other man. “Yup. Got it.” His voice comes out a touch weak.

Hannibal keeps talking. “If you can take the knotted one by the end, you should have no trouble with mine.”

“Wait.” Will’s hand wraps around the largest one, a good eight inches long with a large knot swollen around the base. “This one?” he says, like Hannibal can see him. “The joke one?”

“Will. Why on earth would I have bought you a joke dildo?”

It flops in his hand, the heft of it obvious. “I. Um. What if I can’t-”

“Then we shall wait, or take it off the table entirely. There will always be other ruts.”

He stares at the monster in his hand and feels like it’s staring back. Two and a half months. He can do this. “Do you want status updates? A journal?”

“Only if you do not think you will be ready in time. Will, I must apologize- I have a patient arriving soon, and must excuse myself.”

Will *chokes.* “You’re in your *office* right now *?* ”

“Yes, I accept patients quite late.”

“We had that discussion while you were at *work.”*

“I was not with a patient.”

“Fucking hell, get off the damn phone.”

“As you wish, Will.” They say their goodbyes.

Will gazes at the wall before him and glances at his watch. No time like the present, after all.

Every day he goes into work and finds Hannibal there, he wonders if the man can smell it on him.

He had expected the sensation to be strange, something he would need to get used to. He knew it couldn’t be entirely awful, or else people wouldn’t do it in the first place. What he *hadn’t* been expecting was just how much he’d like it.

As had been asked of him, he is careful not to finish with anything inside of him, though there are a few close calls, typically when he bumps up a size for the first time. By the time a month has gone by he’s made it to the knotted dildo, and a week after that he musters up the courage to slide the knot inside as well. The sensation makes his toes curl.

With a month to go before Hannibal’s expected rut, he starts experimenting.

He uses the beads, focusing on the feeling of the spheres as they pop in past his rim and the resistance when he gently tries to tug them out. He wakes up on the weekend, slides a plug in, and sees how well he can function while he’s wearing it.

Surprisingly well, as it turns out.

At some point he asks Hannibal if they should get tested. The man assures him they are both clean, and when pressed as to how he could possibly know that, reveals that he can apparently *smell disease.* It’s just another borderline nonsensical event in the strange blur that is the time leading up to Hannibal’s rut.

Hannibal seems to believe he should be the one to inform Jack, and Will isn’t exactly eager to jump in front of that particular bullet. Jack seems upset, but only because he’ll lose access to both of them for the better part of a week instead of only one.

With a week to supposedly go, Will tries to prep himself the way Hannibal had told him to. The actual feeling of it is nothing more than uncomfortable as he goes about his day but when he takes out the plug and is able to slide the knotted dildo all the way in effortlessly it takes every ounce of his willpower not to come on the spot.

Several days later, he gets a call from Hannibal. “It will be soon,” he tells him, even and steady as always.

Will’s tongue feels like it’s about to stick to the roof of his mouth. “Do you need me to come over?”

“Not until tomorrow. It can hit very suddenly and I am already feeling the beginnings of it.”

“Right. Okay. I can head over after work?” That way he could give Jack a heads up. Thankfully, they didn’t have any active cases at the moment. “What do I need to bring?”

“Only what you need for comfort. I will provide food, clothes, and everything else you may need.”

“Really?” Will’s gaze drifts over to his dresser, landing on what became his very own sex toy drawer. “Everything.”

“Everything, Will.”

“Okay then. I’ll make arrangements for the dogs and can call you when I’m on my way there?”

“That would be appreciated.”

“Look, if you need anything before th-”

Hannibal cuts him off. “Tomorrow, Will.”

“Alright.” He swallows. “Tomorrow.”

He takes a moment with his dogs before leaving for work the next day. “Sorry guys,” he murmurs, petting every one of them. “Daddy has to go get fucked for three days straight. I promise some nice people will be taking care of you.”

Winston in particular looks betrayed, but he manages to tear himself away.

Work is a blur he won’t remember, nothing more than one giant distraction. Jack gets irritated enough that he just tells Will to leave early. “I don’t think Hannibal will mind,” he grumbles, practically shoving Will out the door.

And then he’s driving to Dale City, hands white-knuckled on the steering wheel. He parks behind Hannibal’s car in the driveway, as instructed. It’s not like either of them will be using the cars for a while. When the man in question opens the door, he greets Will with a smile. “Welcome,” he greets, holding the door open to let the man in.

Will feels weirdly self-conscious about how he’s just shown up in the same shit he always wears, despite being explicitly told to do so. “Hello,” he answers stiffly.

Hannibal pauses. “Before you come inside, I must tell you- if you start to have any second thoughts, you are free to leave without consequences."

“Just let me in,” Will mutters, faintly irritated. Hannibal steps back and does so.

Seeing the inside of the house again makes Will tense up. The pantry, he notes, has a brand new door. “Is everything alright?” Hannibal probes gently.

“Totally,” Will rambles. “Not incredibly nervous at all. Entirely fine.”

Behind him, he hears a soft puff of laughter. “Allow me to show you around. There are a number of things you need to be made aware of.”

Their first stop is the kitchen. Hannibal shows him all of the meals and drinks he’s stocked up, everything easy to eat and prepare, things that take no more than a couple minutes to make ready. There is a veritable ocean of juices, things high in sugar and vitamins to keep your energy up. Towards the back, Will is amused to see, there is gatorade.

“I think we could live off this for a month.”

“I may have overprepared,” Hannibal admits. “Your body will not be prepared to live off as little nutrition as mine will be, I’m afraid.”

“How long did this all take to make?”

“Cooking is something I greatly enjoy,” Hannibal tells him instead of answering the question. Will fights the urge to roll his eyes and closes the fridge with a soft click. “There are additional drinks in the pantry. If you find anything else you would like to eat, you are free to do so.”

They move upstairs, and Hannibal takes Will to a smaller bedroom, surprisingly plain and unassuming. “This will be your room,” he explains.

“My room?” Will peers inside. “Are we going to be sleeping separately?”

“Of course not,” Hannibal answers. “The wardrobe there has plenty of clothes, and the bathroom is stocked with any supplies you may need.” Will ducks into said bathroom, both surprised by and entirely expecting the formidable vat of artificial slick, butt plug and enema supplies that are politely lined up along the edge of the bathtub.

“Cool. Why the second room?” Hannibal motions for Will to come back out of the bathroom, swinging the door closed to seal them both inside. Will’s breath catches- attached to the formidable, sturdy door, there is an electronic locking mechanism.

“Once I have left, you will reprogram this and set a code I cannot figure out. It extends to both sides of the lock so it is imperative I cannot guess it. Simply hold the pound key until it flashes three times, then enter the code you wish to use.”

“Hannibal, I-”

“It is important that you have a safe space where I cannot reach you. You will not have hormones driving you, and will need some time to recover. I am not likely to allow you that time once I have entered my rut.”

“I don’t know what to say.”

Hannibal opens the door and steps out. “You need not say anything. Come, let me show you the bedroom.”

Will trails after Hannibal, head in a fog. The main bedroom has a lock as well- external only, this time. “If needed, you can lock me inside this room for a short period of time. I will break through this one eventually, so try not to use it unless it is an emergency.”

“You’re making it sound like you’re some sort of wild animal,” Will laughs. “Am I really going to be in danger of starving to death?”

“I would rather prepare for the worst than weather the aftermath,” Hannibal tells him.

It makes sense, in a twisted sort of way.

This room looks a lot more like what he would expect of Hannibal, minus the huge canopied bed he always sort of assumed the other man would have. Too impractical, he guesses. Maybe that one’s waiting in the home in Baltimore. The bed is still luxuriously large, and looks so soft and inviting that Will has to tell himself that it would be inappropriate to throw himself upon it without warning.

None of the other rooms seems to matter, though Hannibal informs him that he is welcome to explore. They decide to have one last normal dinner, while Hannibal is still lucid.

Over the meal, Hannibal continues to warn Will away. “If you are having second thoughts-”

“Do you want me to sign a contract or something?” Will interrupts. “Why do you keep telling me the same thing over and over? Are you *trying* to send me running?”

“I continue to give you this warning because once I truly enter rut, leaving will no longer be an option.”

“No, of course not, I’m not going to just abandon you in the middle.”

“It will not be an option because I will not physically allow you to leave,” Hannibal clarifies.

Will stiffens. “Oh,” he finally squeaks out. He recovers. “Well, I’m still not leaving.”

At that, Hannibal smiles, looking oddly satisfied. They finish dinner, do the dishes, and it’s all so pleasantly domestic that Will forgets for a moment why he’s here.

Then Hannibal asks him to go upstairs, shower, and meet him in the bedroom. He programs the door lock on his way out.

While Will has never done a walk of shame, it feels almost like he’s doing whatever the opposite of that may be. *Walk of future shame,* he laughs to himself. He opens the door to the bedroom, finds Hannibal waiting for him, hair sluggishly dripping water and wearing nothing but a towel. His mouth goes dry.

Foolishly, Will had decided it was a good idea to almost entirely redress after his shower, into a soft pair of pajamas he had found tucked away in the wardrobe. They fit far too well to have been meant for anyone but himself. Hannibal tips his head to the side, a strangely reptilian gesture, openly admiring the way they hug closely to Will's frame. "Undress, if you would, and then on the bed." Hannibal's words are clipped, like it's taking him more effort than normal to form them.

Must be close, Will thinks distantly, pulling the shirt over his head and stepping out of the bottoms. He pauses with a hand on the edge of his boxer-briefs. It seems a bit ridiculous to be getting shy at this stage so he pulls them off, doing his best to avoid any sort of eye contact with Hannibal as he clambers onto the bed.

Hannibal's hands on his hips hurry him along before flipping him onto his back entirely, a finger brushing against his hole so abruptly that it makes him yelp with surprise. "A little warning would be nice," Will grumbles.

"You did not prepare."

"I mean, you're still lucid, and-" it ends in another yelp as Hannibal slips the tip of the finger inside, warm and dry.

"Do not mistake lucidity for self-control," he murmurs, but pulls the finger back out.

"Noted," Will replies, letting his head fall back onto the pillow. "But are you really going to tell me you didn't have any plans?" Hannibal leans back and to the side, returning into view with a far more reasonably sized squeeze bottle of lube and a very distinctly shaped object tangled in his fingers.

Will thinks, for a moment, that Hannibal is approaching him with the detached metal handle of his cutlery drawer, but the object is too smooth and asymmetrical for that to be the case. It is a long, curved crescent ending in a sphere on both sides, one tapering into a far larger circle than the other. "This may be cold at first," Hannibal warns him, spreading the lube liberally across the larger end. "Are you ready?" He moves between Will's legs, pushing one up to his torso, and Will grabs it almost automatically.

Hannibal places the edge of the object against Will, causing him to flinch. "Y-Yeah," he answers, trying to make himself relax. "I'm ready." Slow and steady, Hannibal eases the object inside, pushing it through yielding flesh.

He gets it in about an inch when the coldness of the object finally reaches Will's brain and his entire body tenses and clenches *down.*

"You *had* to go with metal," Will mutters, brow pinching together. He closes his eyes, tries to focus on anything other than the cold, rigid object inside of him.

"Relax," Hannibal murmurs. "You will adjust."

The object moves slightly- *he's trying to warm the rest of it with his fingers,* Will deduces. He leans back, and tries to relax. The biting cold fades into a far more pleasant coolness.

Whatever Hannibal had been waiting for, he seems to see it, because he pushes the toy further inside, the rest of the metal still cold but noticeably warmer. It's strange to feel it taper and actually get slimmer as it enters, odd in the way he feels it curving forwards, and then several more inches of it are inside of him and a shudder rips through his entire body.

He knows about the prostate, has had quite a few passing encounters with it in his journey to this point, but feeling a direct pressure on it is another thing entirely. "Here?" Hannibal asks him, curving the toy further forwards, but it simply grazes the gland and slips under it.

"Higher," Will sighs. Hannibal tips the toy back, slides it further inside and then tilts it as before, and this time Will arches off the bed. "T-There," he manages to get out. "Right there."

"Beautiful," Hannibal whispers, and Will does not have anything approaching the correct mental facilities to work out what exactly he's referring to at the moment, not with the way the unyielding toy presses harshly against him. It borders on too much and Hannibal doesn't seem interested in letting up any time soon.

Instead, he slowly rubs the toy in tiny circles, never easing up with the pressure, just constant, delicious contact. Will has been dancing around it, deliberately avoiding this for more than two months, and to finally have it- "You can't keep doing that," he pants, pleasure licking up his spine like flames.

"Why?" Hannibal can still speak, but the word is strained and comes out closer to a grunt.

"I've been-" The toy tips back, taking the pressure off briefly before diving back forward, and the brief change makes Will cry out. "I've, ah, you made me ignore it for so long, it's too much all at once, if you keep going I'm already-"

Hannibal seems to have taken that as a personal challenge because the toy jumps forward and Will's eyes fly open and his back arches off the bed as he comes embarassingly quickly. He throws an arm across his face, chest heaving, so he doesn't have to face Hannibal after that particularly abrupt display.

Except he doesn't have to face Hannibal at all because he's roughly flipped over onto his knees, feels Hannibal using the last shreds of his reasoning to squirt more of the lube directly into Will's ass and it's followed by a pressure, hot and unrelenting. "Fuck, oh *fuck,* " Will hisses as Hannibal sinks inside of him with a growl. "Oh you *bastard.* " From Hannibal's wording, he had assumed the largest dildo was slightly larger than the Alpha himself, but reality seems to be the inverse. It's a stretch, more than he's ever felt, but not painful or intolerable.

Which is lucky, since Hannibal has definitely fallen into his rut at last.

Hannibal fucks into him deeply, until he feels the knot that has formed catching against his rim with every thrust. The man doesn't seem focused enough to press Will flat onto the mattress so he reaches up, fitting his hands on the top of the headboard to hold himself up through Hannibal's bone-rattling thrusts. It feels like his skeleton is being fucked right out of his body, in the best way possible.

But before he can truly appreciate the sensation, Hannibal *snarls,* and then the knot is brutally forced inside of him as Hannibal comes.

“Well I feel a *lot* less embarrassed now,” Will pants, to no one since Hannibal doesn’t seem to be in the mood for conversation. He seems a lot more interested in enveloping Will in his crushing embrace. It had hurt, having the knot pushed inside, but only briefly and not in the way that came with actual damage. All of it had barely lasted long enough for Will’s brain to catch onto what was happening, leaving him with a confused, mild arousal and the unique sensation of semen spilling into him. The only thing left to do would be to wait out Hannibal’s knot so they could separate.

They never had discussed that, Will realizes, so he awkwardly cranes his head around until he locates a clock. His position isn’t particularly uncomfortable, the worst thing about it being Hannibal’s bruising grip which would always be a problem so he may as well get used to it now.

It’s thirteen minutes, in the end, which nearly makes Will laugh. Hannibal is sliding back and out of him and he straightens up, meaning to kneel up and off the Alpha. He gets about fifty percent of a thought out- *huh, the knot went down but-* before Hannibal sits down heavily behind him and pulls Will all the way back down his cock before he can even completely get off of it.

The sudden movement makes Will gasp and his legs fall awkwardly apart, one landing outside of Hannibal’s own while the other is pulled back in the Alpha’s arm and pressed against Will’s chest. Hannibal is holding it so tightly that he uses it for leverage, plastering the Beta against his chest as his hips snap up to fuck him. “O-Oh god,” Will exhales shakily. He can’t move in this position, can do nothing more than take what Hannibal gives him, and what he’s being given is something he *very* much enjoys.

With this angle it feels like Hannibal goes deeper, his cock stretching Will out and filling him with that wonderful pressure. He’s not getting direct stimulation on his prostate but it doesn’t seem to fucking matter with the way the thick cock inside of him rubs up against it with every slow thrust. “H-Hannibal,” Will moans, and then a hand in his curls is jerking his head back and to the side. It’s only for a moment but he locks eyes with Hannibal, sees dilated pupils covering a brilliant red before Hannibal is kissing him.

The kiss is aggressive, nearly choking, Hannibal seemingly determined to force as much of himself inside of Will as possible. His tongue pushes so far into Will’s mouth that he wonders if the man is trying to lick his tonsils. This part of Hannibal is as dexterous as the rest of him, coaxing Will’s own tongue far enough out that his teeth close down around it, fangs nibbling with unexpected gentleness. When Hannibal finally detaches Will cannot help but notice the line of saliva tying them together, and he whimpers.

Hannibal does not move far, biting down along Will’s jaw hard enough to leave marks but not to break the skin. His mouth travels back and Will feels himself tilting his head away, baring his neck, feels the teeth fitting back over the nearly faded mark on his neck-

“No,” Will hears himself say with a sudden flash of clarity. Hannibal’s rhythm falters, but then, miraculously- the teeth lift away.

As some sort of revenge for not being allowed to bite, Hanibal slows even further, moving in and out of Will with a frustrating casualness. “Come on,” Will begs him, utterly unabashed. “Please, don’t *slow down.”*

Instead of listening, Hannibal’s hand moves to Will’s forehead, tipping his head back until his neck stretches over the man’s shoulder. He leans down, fits his teeth across the plane of flesh- but he does not bite, simply holds Will by the neck.

Will’s breathing quickens. If Hannibal has a sudden moment of psychosis, all he needs to do is close his jaws and he would tear Will’s throat out. The hand on his forehead slips away while the teeth remain, keeping Will in place with nothing but the suggestion of a bite. It meanders down, pressing down Will’s body, palm to chest. Hannibal’s fingers splay, sliding further, brushing past his cock to touch the area where Hannibal is lazily fucking into Will’s body. A finger traces around Will’s stretched rim, and the Beta lets out a high noise.

Finally, Hannibal moves his hand back up and runs his fingers along Will’s cock, bobbing against his chest with every movement. Will is too afraid of damage to speak, but a word slips out of him anyways- “Please.” The fingers circle around him and Hannibal starts to jerk him off at the same lackadaisical pace.

It’s slow because it can’t be fast, lest Hannibal risk shouldering Will directly in the spine. It smolders, all of it, building a slow burning pleasure that spreads throughout his entire body until he can no longer tell which parts of it are physical and which are mental. Something about it is unbearably intimate, Hannibal’s teeth on his neck, Hannibal’s broad hand gently pumping on his dick, Hannibal’s tongue pressed onto his skin, tasting the flesh offered to him. Hannibal buried deep inside of him, moving in and out with gentle rocks. That’s what does it, in the end. The care with which Hannibal is handling him, the soft, tender touches. When Will comes it’s less of a thunderclap and more like a cup overflowing.

Hannibal opens his mouth but Will does not raise his head, only turns it to the side when he is released, panting heavily into Hannibal’s neck. The Alpha never stops fucking him all throughout his orgasm.

Then both hands vanish and reappear around his neck, jerking Will forward and lifting him higher off of Hannibal’s body. He thinks for a moment that Hannibal is going to use his grip on Will’s neck to move him up and down but he only holds Will there as his pace increases and he fucks up into the man, and this might be *worse,* it’s choking and it’s difficult to breathe. He tries to plant his knees on the bed to rest his weight on them but then Hannibal’s knees rise up and force Will’s legs to spread, ensuring he *can’t* get any leverage and he bears all of the weight on his throat. The hands *squeeze.* “Ha-” he tries to cry out, but lack of air makes it come out as nothing more than a rasp. His hands fly up to scratch at Hannibal’s as he chokes and his vision darkens, Hannibal had told him he’d get hurt, Hannibal *isn’t stopping-*

He’s pushed down, over and around the Alpha’s knot as Hannibal comes. With the blockage of his airway removed he gulps down great lungfuls of oxygen, coughing and heaving as he feels Hannibal’s cum shoot inside of him. A strong pair of arms pulls him back, pinning him against the man’s broad chest, one around his torso and the other around his throat, pressing

down just enough to make it hard to breath again. The panic rises, his breathing becomes rapid and shallow, everything swims around him-

And then nothing.

Will wakes to Hannibal fingering him.

His long fingers can reach surprisingly deep inside, expertly massaging his prostate, and Will is coming before he really even realizes what is happening.

Hannibal flips Will onto his stomach and fucks him through his daze, pressing his face so deeply into the sheets that he starts to hyperventilate. He comes when Will's body starts to go limp.

Released, Will takes in huge gulping breaths of air. "I need to eat," he gasps, voice still scratchy and abused. The Alpha inside of him gives a displeased growl and bites deep into Will's shoulder, drawing blood. "I-I'm not leaving, I swear. Please, Hannibal. I need a break."

Despite his demeanour not really changing, when the knot deflates, Will is able to slip out from beneath Hannibal and leave the room unobstructed. He goes straight to his room and locks the door behind him before collapsing against it.

He fists his hands in his hair and pulls. Panicking now would be very, very bad. Hannibal had warned him countless times, but had he even *realized* that he would be this violent? There's no way he wouldn't have warned Will more specifically, if so.

Right?

Will feels something shift inside of himself and he winces. Carefully, he stands and makes his way to the bathroom, to clean out everything that's been left inside.

His reflection freezes him to the ground. Around his neck there are perfect, violently purpling handprints, forming behind a much lighter bar from the man's arm. His shoulder is slowly oozing blood. Will shakes his head and steps into the shower. This time, he prepares himself.

Before returning to the bedroom Will heads down to the kitchen, heating up a meal for himself and eating it as quickly as he can manage. He grabs a bowl of pre-cut fruit and a bottle of juice to take up to Hannibal. Outside, the world is bathed in the early morning light. They managed to sleep through the night, it seems.

He's nearly tackled to the ground when he reenters the bedroom, Hannibal pressing him against the wall and sucking at his neck. Somehow he manages not to drop anything. "Hey, no, I've got food," he huffs. "You should eat." Teeth set across his shoulder and bite down. "The *food,* eat the *food.* "

Hannibal is clearly not listening. Will lobs the bottle of juice onto the floor a safe distance away- it's capped, it won't spill. He uses his newly empty hand to pull Hannibal away from him with a harsh tug to his hair. A warning rumble starts in the Alpha's chest, but Will quickly holds up the fruit between them and Hannibal's eyes lock onto it. "See? Fruit." Hannibal makes no movements to actually take the food from him, so he peels off the lid himself. "Are you really going to make me do this?" The Alpha's eyes are locked onto Will's fingers. With a sigh, he pulls a piece of fruit out and offers it to Hannibal.

The man bites into it immediately, licking the sweet juices off of Will's fingers once the piece has been devoured. He patiently waits for more.

They get about halfway through the container before Hannibal's libido wins out and he lifts Will up against the wall by the thighs. He scrambles to get the lid securely back on the fruit and chucks it blindly across the room just in time for Hanibal to pull the plug out of him and slide home.

Will's head falls back against the wall with a thud. Hannibal seems perfectly happy to pin him back by the thighs as he fucks into him, but Will tries to push forward and finds the man is willing to allow it. He wraps his legs around Hannibal's waist instead.

Hannibal is still holding him up by the thighs, fingers digging into the flesh and muscle tightly. He's thrusting long and deep, clearly how he likes it, every movement jolting Will up the wall before he drops back down. Despite everything, despite the lingering terror from the night previous, the aching marks on his neck- it still feels so *fucking good.*

Anticipation lights up every nerve in Will's body. What will Hannibal do this time? Is he going to dash Will's head against the wall or press him back by the chest until his ribs crack? Would he lean in, clamp his teeth down on his neck and bite until the blood sprays out of him? Hannibal leans in, and Will's breathing stutters-

But the Alpha only kisses him, all teeth and tongue. A fang catches on Will's lip and tears it open, and when the blood hits his tongue he suddenly and unexpectedly comes. Hannibal growls and buries himself deep inside of Will's pulsing body as he echoes the sentiment.

He doesn't even really feel himself being pressed against the wall as they wait out the knot- it can't be comfortable, objectively. When the Alpha finally pulls out of him and leans back in, scenting Will, he realizes that Hannibal must still be absolutely filthy.

It's a bit of a tricky maneuver but he manages to lure Hannibal into the shower. He gets fucked against the tile for his efforts, hot and sweaty and gasping, but at least Hannibal emerges cleaner than before. There is another container of the artificial slick in this bathroom as well and Will silently thanks Hannibal for his foresight.

Hannibal's mood seems virtually unpredictable. He's just as likely to make gentle love to Will on the bed until he shudders his way to orgasm as is he to choke him into unconsciousness mid-sex, and Will has absolutely no way of knowing which it will be until it's over. There is one constant; Hannibal is not willing to let Will out of the bedroom a second time. He had intended to take the fruit back down to the fridge so it wouldn't rot and ends up eating it himself in the evening instead.

Now, he had apparently gotten a little bit too close to the door, because Hannibal has pinned him to the floor and is fucking into him brutally fast. He had pulled a tie out of his wardrobe and pulled it around Will's neck like a leash, forcing the man to arch his body upwards or risk strangulation. If he lifts any part of his body too high and gets within range Hannibal adds another bloody bite mark to his growing collection. As a result, his stomach sinks towards the ground as his spine curves sharply upwards- there is only so much free space on his shoulders for Hannibal to claim, after all. The position puts an incredible amount of strain on his back and he cannot stop himself from reaching for the tie, desperate to loosen it and allow himself some precious extra air, but all it accomplishes is Hannibal grabbing his wrist and violently twisting his arm behind his back.

Will feels his shoulder pop out of its socket and he *screams*.

Hannibal releases Will's wrist and stutters to a stop, immediately bending over and peering at the dislocated join. Will collapses to the ground, little shivers of pain rippling through him. *He's a doctor,* he tells himself as he feels Hannibal prod at the injury and finally wrap a hand around Will's bicep, the other bracing on his collarbone, tightening painfully across the bloody punctures. *He's a doctor, thank fuck he's a doctor*- With a sharp movement he pops the shoulder back into place, immediately lessening the pain. Everything is still for a moment and when Will glances upwards he sees Hannibal with the stained hand at his lips, licking Will's blood off with obvious relish.

And then he picks up the makeshift leash and goes right back to fucking Will.

"No," Will sobs, every jolt of his shoulder sending stabs of pain down his arm. "Hannibal, please, you can't be serious-" The tie is pulled tighter in warning, and Will's words trail off into a disbelieving cry. At least he isn't touching the injured arm or putting any pressure on the shoulder.

It hurts, it *really* fucking hurts, but the pain sort of blurs everything for Will, fades all sensation into one giant clump of nothing. Would Hannibal even stop if he killed him, or would he just keep on fucking his corpse until his rut ended? The thought sends a cold shiver through his body, some unholy union of pleasure and pain. A particularly forceful thrust presses his lower body down to the ground and he feels something wet against his lower body. He cranes his head and glances down, expecting blood.

Will startles. He sees that he is flaccid, which he expected, but instead of blood he sees a puddle of his own semen. When the fuck did he manage to come? There was only one moment where he was unaware, a blinding flash of pain-

His eyes roll back into his head and he passes out before the knowledge can click home.

He doesn't wake until the next morning, when he does so to Hannibal curled around him, holding his injured arm firmly in place like a human sling. When he wakes as well, he tears a shirt apart and creates something closer to a real one.

Will spends the day walking a knife's edge between terror and arousal until all of it runs together. Hannibal holds him tenderly, taking care to favor his injured shoulder, and then he holds a pillow over his face and fucks into Will's thrashing and bleeding body as he fights to survive. Will can't remember which one makes him come harder.

At least he gets a new chance to leave the room- apparently he is allowed one exit a day. He makes it count, eating and gathering non-perishable items to carry back with him, and collects whatever he needs from his safe room to bring back into the master bathroom instead.

That night, Hannibal is sweet to him, drifting off to sleep with Will buried in his arms. Will stays wide awake until he moves Hannibal's arm across his throat, and only then does he finally fall asleep.

His shoulder hurts even more the next day, and he's not entirely sure if he can handle another day of this and make it out whole. It's sometime in the mid-afternoon, when Hannibal has mounted him, that a forgotten idea slips back to him.

He had done some research of his own, on the way Omegas behaved during a heat. Things like speech patterns, ways to encourage the protective nature of the Alpha on a baser level. If he could activate some sort of deeper instinct in Hannibal, perhaps the man would turn away from his more violent tendencies. The position he is in is already close- hands and knees, his front dipping closer to the floor since he can only put weight on one of his arms. He shifts his hips, tilts them to match an angle he had read somewhere encourages insemination, pitches his voice up higher, and as sweetly as he can muster he moans *"Alpha…* "

Above him, Hannibal stiffens. All Will gets in the way of a warning is a thunderous growl and then his front is pressed flat to the ground while his hips remain tilted painfully upwards and sharp teeth are biting into his neck. They don't dig in far enough to leave a scar, only hold him perfectly in place, though the fangs have punctured the skin based on the trickles of fluid he feels sliding down his neck. It's brutal, animalistic, nothing more than the mating of a beast. Will cries out weakly, but any movement makes Hannibal latch on more ferociously until Will falls still once more. Hannibal fucks into him with a speed and strength he wouldn't have even thought was possible before, every thrust rubbing his body harshly against the carpet, leaving a raw stinging sensation behind. It makes him feel less like a human and more like an object that exists simply for Hannibal's use.

When he feels the bulge of the knot press inside of him, Will nearly sighs with relief. The now familiar sensation of semen pouring into him is a welcome break.

Except Hannibal does not move from where he has Will pinned by the throat. "Hannib-" Will starts to say, only to be quieted by a tightening of teeth and a dark rumble. *He wants to make sure,* Will tells himself. The flow ends, and Will sighs with relief.

Hannibal's cock inside him twitches and shudders, and a fresh wave of semen spurts out of it, and Will tells himself not to panic. The knot lasts twenty minutes and Will is held against the floor and filled for the duration of it.

It seems to have taken a lot out of Hannibal because he simply falls backwards onto the floor afterwards, seeming somewhat dazed. Will takes advantage of it to sneak out a second time for the day, trying to ignore the awful sloshing he feels inside of him, not quite sure if it's real or imagined.

Will spends nearly thirty minutes trying to flush out all the semen. He's never entirely sure if he gets all of it or not. When he returns to the bedroom, Hannibal picks him up before the door has even closed and throws him onto the bed. "I know," he rushes out, flinching as Hannibal climbs over him, but his legs are pulled up slowly and not in one jerky movement. "I shouldn't have left twice, I'm sorry, I'm not abandoning you- ah!" A cold sensation pushes into him, and when he looks down he's startled to see the metal prostate massager before watching it push into his body. "What are-"

Maybe the rut is clearing, or maybe Hannibal simply decided to change things up, but he slowly teases Will with the toy until he's shivering with pleasure, little shocks of euphoria shooting through his body. Every touch with the toy gradually increases in pressure, moving from light brushes into steady contact and more, more, careening towards *too* hard. The sensation ripples through him, Will's hips jumping upwards to try and escape what is rapidly becoming painful but Hannibal simply chases him. He's moaning, openly, until one particularly loud cry ends with Hannibal pulling the toy out entirely. "Wha?" Will blinks slowly. His world spins as Hannibal flips them, laying back against the sheets and balancing Will above him, slowly lowering him down onto his cock.

And then he doesn't move.

The man straddling him just looks at Hannibal blankly, already lost in a fog of pleasure, exhaustion and pain, so Hannibal arranges Will's legs until he is properly kneeling, digs his hands into his hips and jerks him upwards. Somehow, the message gets through loud and clear, and Will begins to move.

He braces himself against Hannibal's chest with his good arm as he circles his hips, feeling out the right angle and gasping once he hits it, pulling nearly entirely off and only moving back far enough to drag the head of Hannibal's cock along his prostate. It feels incredible, like the toy but burning hot, pressing into him and rubbing against where he feels sore and abused. His eyes flutter closed in pleasure. "Feels good," he murmurs, "Hannibal, you feel so fucking good-" Will can't stop himself, his body dipping down as his hips make aborted thrusts forward, lost in the hot, delicious feeling against his prostate, ovewhelming and consuming. "A-Ah, fuck-" He leans down, mouth falling open and coming to rest around Hannibal's neck, teeth grazing just against the skin. Will finds the meaty flesh behind the arteries and gently, he bites.

Hannibal rears up into a sitting position, Will sinking back down to just above the knot of his cock, but still he does not move, only opens his mouth and buries his face into Will's neck, inhaling deeply.

Will's head tips back and he rises further now, almost entirely upwards and then dropping back down, repeating the motion as he fucks himself on Hannibal's cock. His one good arm is still clinging to Hannibal's chest, fingers buried in the wiry hair. "So big," he moans, relishing the stretch now that he is in control. "Fuck, I can't believe it fits at all." Hannibal

purrs happily, fits his teeth over where Will knows the faded mark sits relatively unmarked by the bruising, but as always he does not bite down. He had taken good care of it as he healed, and the doctors assured him it would vanish entirely in time. All he can think of is what it would look like as a scar, what it would feel like to have Hannibal's teeth rip through his flesh, what it would feel like to be forever *marked.*

The Beta moves faster, rolling his head forwards to rest on Hannibal's shoulder. Every inch of his body is tense with the effort but the burn is just another source of pleasure, the way his muscles strain and fight against their exhaustion. Things feel hazy and dreamlike. An erotic fantasy, something where anything could happen free of consequence. Hannibal's teeth fit more snugly across his neck and he shivers as the arousal crests. Will forces his body down and over the knot himself.

"Bite," he whispers. "Hannibal, bite me."

The Alpha's teeth rip in immediately, tearing deep into the flesh and leaving a mark that Will will bear for the rest of his life. He feels his blood dripping down his back and comes with a cry, his own pleasure pulling Hannibal's out just behind.

Instantly the teeth pull away. "Will…?" he hears, the voice rusty with unuse. He sees no more than a glimpse of Hannibal's eyes, red fading back into a deep mahogany, before he tips backwards and everything fades to black.

The next time Will wakes, he is alone, and everything is red.

Only in the bed- Hannibal sits in a chair as far away from Will as possible, dressed in a simple pair of slacks and white button up. It must not have been very long since the rut ended since the sheets are unchanged, stained so red with Will's blood that it looks like something out of a crime scene.

Hannibal looks like Will feels.

His eyes snap up to the Beta when he hears the stirring. Every inch of him looks like he wants to run to Will's side but is forcing himself not to do so. "Rut over?" Will croaks, taken aback by how bad he sounds.

"How many times did I strangle you?"

"Lost count," Will answers with a shrug. A quick inspection reveals a thick bandage wrapped around his neck, bulging at the site of the bite. More bandages cover his aching shoulders, wind around the rest of his back and cover the countless wounds Hannibal has given him. He looks like he just came out of a particularly nasty car crash. "Did I need stitches this time?"

"I nearly killed you."

Will just sort of shrugs again. "I sent you some pretty mixed messages."

“That in no way excuses-”

“When you dislocated my shoulder, I came.”

Hannibal’s entire body stiffens. “You should not be so cavalier about this. I put you in great danger.”

“Judging by your reaction, you were as surprised by it as I was.”

“I nearly bit down to your spine.”

“Because I *asked you to bite me.* ”

“You were delirious!” It’s as close to shouting as Will has ever heard Hannibal get, and he flinches. “You were dehydrated and anemic, and had been living with an improperly handled dislocated shoulder for nearly *two days.”*

“I don’t regret it,” Will interrupts suddenly. “It was painful and fucking terrifying, but I *don’t regret it.* Do you understand me?”

“I will call Jack.” Hannibal stands. “Since I was in rut, the punishment will be lessened.”

Will opens his mouth to protest, but he collapses into a coughing fit instead. Now, Hannibal’s instinctive desire to care for him finally wins out, and he approaches Will. “Here.” There is a warm thermos on the bed stand, and Hannibal hands it to Will. As Will reaches out to accept it, he sees Hannibal’s eyes track to the bandages on his wrists and arms, dotted faintly with blood. “Warm tea, with honey.”

He takes a long drink, allowing it to soothe his abused throat. “See? You’ve already got the post-strangulation aftercare on lockdown.”

The joke could not have fallen flatter, and Hannibal visibly recoils. “I will call Jack,” he repeats.

“Don’t,” Will coughs, and then he takes another long drink of the warm beverage. “Just. Wait. They’re expecting a couple days of recovery, I’m sure. Give it some time.” He pauses. “And if you sneak out to turn yourself in at any point, I will spin bald-faced lies about how it was all self defense and make sure *I’m* the one who ends up in jail instead.”

Hannibal doesn’t look happy, but he does look resigned. “Why would you try to protect me?”

Will looks away and swallows the truth. When he turns back, Hannibal is watching him with an intense expression, one he only sees for a split second before it morphs back into the *correct* emotion of regret. *He’s off his game,* he thinks to himself. *Still tired. He’s slipping.* “Because you were just as blindsided by it as I was. It’s not like this was some elaborate trap you laid on purpose for me.” There, he sees it- a glimpse of something *wrong,* a mixture of pride and contentment. Imperceptibly, Will shivers.

“It was… unexpected,” comes the effortless lie. Will wouldn’t have known it for what it was unless he knew to look. Probably wouldn’t have seen it otherwise and wouldn’t be able to at

all in a couple days time.

I can see you, he wants to tell him with a grin. *I can see the darkness shifting under the corpse of propriety you wear like a second skin.* He wants to peel the layers away and take a proper look. Instead, he says- “For both of us.”

Hannibal glances away, the fake conversation getting to the both of them. “Very well,” he sighs. “If you want me to wait, I will wait.”

“Thank you,” Will smiles, sickly sweet.

“Are you hungry?”

Will pretends to consider the question. “I could eat.”

“Then I will make you something.” He stands, walks to the door, and halts. “Will, I-”

“Go.” Will makes a *shoo* gesture with his hands. “And don’t come back until it’s with food.” Hannibal bows slightly and closes the door behind him.

Will releases a breath he didn’t even know he’d been holding. He runs through a checklist in his head. Lack of guilt or remorse, shallow emotions, superficial charm, moments of obvious impulse control issues. Aggression. Sadism. Attracted to power. He lies so well because *all* of it is fake, just a suit he wears to blend in with humanity. Highly likely to have killed someone, possibly multiple people. None of it bothers Will.

Because when he first woke, before Hannibal could pull back down the veil of humanity, what he saw was a man looking at his wounds with obvious and genuine pleasure, and when he presses down hard on the bite to send a sharp spark of pain shooting down his spine and remembers how easily he could have died, Will’s cock jumps in his pants.

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